



Rock Steady Review

Issue 9

January 2005

General Abizaid promotes two HHD officers to Captain



General Abizaid with CPT Pond and CPT Way

General John Abizaid, Commander of the US Central Command (CENTCOM) promoted 1LT Sean Pond and 1LT Matthew Way to the rank of Captain on 9 January 2005 at FOB Salerno. During the promotion ceremony General Abizaid addressed the Soldiers of the HHD and commented on their service in support of Operation Enduring Freedom - V.

SSG Martinez inducted into the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club

SSG Felix Martinez was inducted into the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club on 9 January 2005. Induction into the elite Sergeant Audie Murphy Club is a prestigious honor earned by Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs) who have demonstrated and inherent leadership abilities characterized by those of Sergeant Audie Murphy. He was a war hero, movie actor, writer of country western songs and poet. Sergeant Audie Leon Murphy demonstrated the highest qualities of leadership, professional and regard for the welfare of his soldiers and their families. He was the greatest combat Soldier in the 200 plus years of history of the United States. Induction into this club is a privilege earned by NCOs that have contributed significantly to the development of a professional NCO Corps and the combat readiness of the Army. Eligibility extends to all Active Army, Army Reserve and National Guard NCOs in the ranks of Corporal through Sergeant First Class.

Over the course of the past few months SSG Martinez has been studying an array of military subjects and has been through several rehearsal boards prior to the official CTF Thunder selection board. He was selected for induction in December and the official induction ceremony was held in January. The HHD is proud to have him among our ranks.



SSG Felix Martinez at the ceremony

HHD, LTF 524

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If you have any information or announcements that you would like included in the next issue of the "Rock Steady Review" please email me at: edward.wallace1@us.army.mil

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Unit Leadership Notes

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Happy New Year HHD families!

First I would like to thank everyone for all the support you showed our Soldiers throughout the holiday season. It was great to see all of the packages flow in for the troops for Christmas.

Over the past month we had several deserving Soldiers promoted to the next higher rank. For some of the Soldiers it was the second promotion since the unit has been deployed. There were also a few re-enlistments which has been a strong point for the unit. Throughout the deployment more than 16 HHD Soldiers have re-enlisted and taken advantage of cash bonuses and assignments offered by the Army.

I would like to congratulate SSG Martinez on his induction into the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club. It is a honor to have an outstanding professional Non Commissioned Officer like SSG Martinez in the Headquarters Detachment. This distinction clearly distinguishes him well above all of his peers as an NCO that possesses the skills and knowledge critical to any unit. He has a bright future in the military and we wish him continued success.

I had the opportunity to travel to K2 Airbase in early January to visit the Soldiers working there. I was able to watch the 87th Rigger Detachment conduct an airborne operation and visit the rigging facility. I also got to watch the Log Cell Soldiers participate in the K2 basketball, volleyball, and dodge ball tournaments. I attempted to take a trip to Mazir-e-Sharif but was unable to due to the closure of the runway.

Now that the holidays have passed we are working together to develop a plan on the redeployment of the HHD to Hawaii. The next couple of months will be very busy in preparation for the flow of equipment and personnel back to Schofield Barracks. On the last page of the newsletter there is some important information about the day the HHD arrives in Hawaii. I encourage you to read it to get an understanding of what to expect upon the units' arrival in Hawaii.

CPT Wallace

Happy New Year Rock-Steady Family!!

Another year has come and all is going well at FOB Salerno. HHD has done everything imaginable to sustain the War Fighters in support of the War on Terrorism. With less than 70 days left before our much anticipated redeployment, we are continuing our support throughout three regions of Afghanistan and Uzbekistan. There is still a lot of work that must be done and I know our Soldiers will be more than anxious to complete our missions in a timely manner.

This past month, SSG Martinez was officially recognized as a member of the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club during his Induction Ceremony. We have three more Noncommissioned Officers that will be competing for that honor next month. I feel confident that SSG Lee, SSG Garcia and SGT Castorena will do well on 11 February 05. Also this past month, PFC Trevino, 87th QM Detachment (Riggers), won the Logistics Task 524 Soldier of the Month. He represented us well at the Joint Logistics Command board but unfortunately he came up a little short. "Job Well Done"

Block leave has finally come to a close now with all soldiers having the opportunity to see their love ones. I would like to share a special story with you about how close one of our soldiers came to missing the birth of his child. When SGT Herbert departed FOB Salerno on 13 December after a few days of no incoming flights, he was already in for a race against time. With one night stops in K-2 and Kuwait, he finally boarded an aircraft enroute to his leave destination in Alabama. Upon arriving there, he was rushed directly to the hospital, arriving just in time to see his wife deliver a 6.9 lb, 19 inch baby girl. "Congratulations"

In closing, Thanks for all your support throughout the last nine months of our deployment. We will see you soon.

1SG Young "Rocksteady 7"

Battalion Commander Notes

Happy 2005 to all the Make A Way friends and families! Things are really starting to move fast as we come closer to our departure date. Our replacement units have stopped by to assess the situation - and just this week, one of our replacement companies showed up to allow Alpha Company, 725 Main Support Battalion return to Hawaii. We no longer need binoculars to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Our support to Task Force THUNDER has increased dramatically over the last month. Our Soldiers are driving for humanitarian relief missions and also providing support to Medical clinics set up in neighboring villages. The team at K2 and MeS have visited local schools and orphanages and distributed clothes, toys and school gear. They are making a lasting impression on the people of Afghanistan and Uzbekistan. Additionally - we are sending our maintenance teams out to assess the readiness of outlying forward bases. MSG Ardis and his team found the weather at ORGUN-E very cold and snowy and was glad to be back at FOB SALERNO and its warm temperatures.

We are planning a MAKE A WAY ball for the first week in June following everyone getting back from Iraq and Afghanistan and their 30 days of leave. We will have a lot of families leaving the island (PCS'ing) and changing jobs, so this appears to be a great time to get together and have some fun. Please contact your FRG point of contact for more information.

Finally, as we plan to head back to Hawaii, we will provide you with the latest return information as soon as we have it. We are scheduled to fold the MAKE A WAY colors up for transport home on 15 March. How long it takes us to move to the airfield and find a plane that holds us all will be the hardest to determine. If you have any questions, please contact the rear detachment commander CPT Jeff Kutter at 655-2137.

Aloha and Make a Way!!! LTC Brian Haebig



Section Updates

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Battalion S1



Aloha from the S1 shop. We are happily counting down the days to redeployment and look forward to seeing our friends and family once more. Life in Salerno continues to improve. Our new building is almost complete and we look forward to receiving our replacements. Many thanks to our family and friends for all the good wishes and packages during the holiday season.

CPT Stobie

Battalion S2



Greetings from the S2 section: This month I would like to highlight the Battalion Intelligence NCO: SGT Elliot Valerio. This fine young NCO has worked diligently over the last 10 months to evaluate intelligence and maintain the battalion battle readiness. Part of his mission while here at Camp Salerno has been to aid the Tactical Humint Team in the gathering of human intelligence outside the wire. SGT Valerio has made numerous trips throughout Khowst City with the Intel Team. His time spent within the Intel community has really sharpened SGT Valerio's tools and has raised the bar of his intel reporting to the battalion. The THT has been very grateful for the help and expertise SGT Valerio has given to their small covert team. **CPT Pond**

Battalion S3



Happy New Year!

We can hardly wait until springtime to be back home with our families. We would also like to send our congratulations the parents of the newest member of the S3 Shop, Alibia LaSalle Herbert, born to our nightshift NCOIC SGT John Herbert and his wife Stephanie. All of us here in the S3 shop are eagerly anticipating our return home, to make this New Year a happier one. **SSG Moore**

Battalion S4



Aloha from the S4 staff... CPT Jacobsen is out of the office this week and once again, I am leading the way. This has been a long month for the S4 Section as we prepare for redeployment. I had the pleasure of reciting the "I Have A Dream" speech by the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at the base chapel. As with his dream, the Soldiers' of the 25th ID Light are making those same dreams a reality for the people of Afghanistan and Iraq. I ask each of you to continue praying for the family of the Soldiers' that made the ultimate sacrifice and for those of us that continue to fight for peace and equality for all people. **SFC Brown**

Battalion Support Operations



Aloha from the SPO shop!! First of all we want to say thank-you for all the gifts and care packages we received from the FRG and family members for the holiday season. It wasn't the same being at home, but we had a great time. We would like to welcome a new addition to the SPO team here in Salerno from K2 with CPT Asis replacing CW4 Weis as the SPO Maintenance Officer. We would like to farewell CW4 Weis as he has done an outstanding job for the LTF 524 especially with the STAMIS operations. We have officially taken over the mission for RC East as the LTF 725 has departed the CJOA. With the new mission for the LTF 524, we have identified CPT Way to relocate his office at BAF to take care of our primary customer-CTF Thunder. The light at the end of the tunnel is getting brighter and we can't wait until we get home to our families and friends. The picture to the left shows the MVACIS mobile x-ray machine that is used to scan vehicles at the front gate of FOB Salerno. **CPT Perez**

Headquarters Detachment



Happy New Year from the Headquarters Detachment. We want to thank you all for the holiday packages there was plenty to go around for everyone. SPC White and I just returned from leave with our families in Hawaii. We are currently preparing and packing for re-deployment it is a big job but we are looking forward to it. We look forward to seeing our friends and loved ones very soon.

SGT Guerra



Mazar E Sharif Update

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FLE Supports US Ambassador Visit

The FLE had the honor of hosting the Special Presidential Envoy and Ambassador to Afghanistan during an unscheduled visit to Mazar-e-Sharif. The Honorable Zalmay Khalilzad spent an evening with the FLE after conducting business in Sherberghan, Afghanistan. The Ambassador took time to visit with FLE Soldiers and expressed his gratitude for the tremendous job they are doing for the people of Northern Afghanistan.

Holiday Gifts

The FLE and other units the FLE supports received enough holiday mail to fill a small tent! "It definitely was a Christmas to remember! It was great to see that the world remembers us here in MeS," stated MSG Caruso. MSG Caruso has been in MeS since March and was extremely surprised at how high morale was during the holiday season. The FLE is currently writing numerous thank you notes to the hundreds of individuals and organizations that sent the mountain sized stack of holiday gifts.

Promotion and Birthday Celebrations

The New Year brought many changes to the FLE. The first order of business for 2005 was the promotion of PFC Colon. She was deployed to MeS in April as a PV2 and through hard work and dedication was promoted to Specialist on 01 January 2005. SPC Colon has served as the FLE's Food Service NCOIC and has received numerous honors and recognitions. Congratulations to SPC Colon for continuous achievement. The FLE also celebrated PFC Buenconsejo's twentieth birthday in grand fashion and she stated, "It's was great to celebrate my birthday with the FLE but I look forward to turning 21 somewhere else!"



Honorable Zalmay Khalilzad with
CPT Eubanks and MSG Caruso



SPC Wilcox treating a camp laborer



MeS Soldiers firing on the M16 range



FLE Soldiers with the US Ambassador to Afghanistan;
Honorable Zalmay Khalilzad



K2 Update

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Happy New Year from K2. We all made it through the holidays and now looking forward to redeploying back home. All of us are hoping the next couple of months will go by fast. Once we go back I am sure the one thing we won't miss is this cold weather we have been having. Next to reuniting with our families we look forward to being in the warm weather. Despite the weather we continue to support the team throughout Afghanistan and K2. The 87th QM Det. has done a couple of more airdrop missions with superb results. Congratulations to SPC Trevino from the 87th QM Det. for winning the Soldier of the Month Board. We would like to also welcome SFC Pennington who took over the Maintenance Section. **CPT Martinez**



COL McKenna presents SPC Lewis a JLC Certificate of Achievement



SGT Rennie makes a perfect Parachute Landing Fall



CPT Moreno & SFC Hull promote SPC Aung to SGT



SSG Johnson & SGT Rennie promoting PFC Bate to SPC



SSG Johnson, SGT Rennie, and SPC Engelman on the ramp of a C-130 prior to an Airborne Op



SGT Rennie exiting a C-130 over K2 Airbase, Uzbekistan



Current Events

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SPC Miguel Trevino selected as the LTF 524 Soldier of the Month



SPC Miguel Trevino

On 5 Jan 05 SPC Miguel Trevino was selected as the LTF 524 Soldier of the Month. For his achievement he will be presented the Army Achievement Medal. SPC Trevino is assigned to the 87th Quartermaster Detachment (Parachute) at K2 Airbase and is responsible for rigging and air dropping supplies to units across Afghanistan. He attended the Joint Logistics Command Soldier of the Month Board on 10 January 2005 and placed third. Congratulations on a job well done!

January Promotions

1LT Sean Pond	to	CPT
1LT Matthew Way	to	CPT
SPC Tin Aung	to	SGT
PFC Milagros Colon	to	SPC
PFC Miguel Trevino	to	SPC
PFC Brent Bate	to	SPC

Soldier Voices

What was your New Year's Resolution and have you stuck with it so far?



PFC Jose Morales
To be more spiritual minded
Yes I am sticking with it



SGT Gordon Castorena
To become a better person in 05
Yes so far so good



SPC Jonathan Nesbit
To stop smoking cigarettes
Yes so far so good

HHD Welcomes a New Baby Girl



The Headquarters & Headquarters Detachment is happy to welcome a new baby girl to the HHD family. On December 15, 2004 Mrs. Herbert gave birth to a baby girl, 6lb 9oz and 19 inches. After being delayed in his departure from FOB Salerno, K2 Airbase, and Kuwait SGT Herbert made it to the hospital in Alabama just in the nick of time to witness the delivery.

January Birthdays

SPC Wilbert Mendez	10 Jan
PFC Kym Buenconsejo	13 Jan
CPT TJ Edgerton	21 Jan
SGT Kelly Wilcox	24 Jan
MSG Dennis Bricker	28 Jan
CPT Shawn Ross	30 Jan



Soldiers In Action

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HHD Soldiers at CPT Way & CPT Pond's promotion



1SG Young and SGT Wilcox in the DFAC on Christmas Day



SSG Lee on his way to JBAD to conduct drivers training



CPT Wallace conducting JMPT on SSG Johnson



CPT Asis re-enlisting SPC Marshall at FOB Salerno



MVACIS team from left SSG Garcia, SGT Castorena, SGT Wilcox, and SPC Marshall



Soldiers In Action

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From left: PFC Morales, SGT Guerra, PFC Maki, SPC Giusti at the FOB Salerno M16 range



HHD Soldiers in front of a M198 Howitzer at FOB Salerno



LTF 524 K2 Dodge-ball team



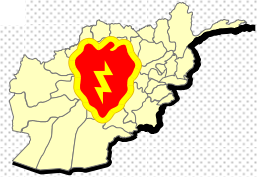
CPT Wallace & SSG Johnson promoting PFC Trevino to SPC



SSG Wilgus firing an Afghan Sniper Rifle at FOB Salerno



SPC Trevino & SPC Engelman on the drop zone at K2 Airbase



Soldier Support Information

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Re Deployment Information

Those returning in February and March will be welcomed in the National Guard Hangar near the Kawamura Gate, because of construction on 2-25's hangar.

In the 2-25 hangar, there will be a screen on the wall with live coverage of the Soldiers as they turn in sensitive items and in-process in 2 nearby hangars; In the National Guard hangar there will not be these capabilities.

The Soldiers will have free pizza and drinks as they in-process, before they reunite with their families; The FRG's will have a tent and water coolers filled with ice and water, from which they may serve snacks and drinks for family members.

Chaplain's Blessing

Hard to believe the end of the deployment is nearly upon us. The holiday's seemed to be a difficult time for our Soldiers and families, the prospect of returning home did much to comfort the seasonal loneliness. The support from the HHD FRG was overwhelming during this holiday season and brought a special feeling in the heart of every Rock-steady soldier. Thank you so much your hard work. Begin preparing for your soldier's return by talk to the kids about their concerns and expectations for reunion. God will Make a Way.

Chaplain Wehlage

ACS Classes

ACS is hosting a lecture series to help families prepare for reunion

February 9: "Putting the 'Welcome' in Welcome Home"

Victor Voth, Director of the Marriage and Family Therapy Center will talk about issues couples face during the reunion process. Topics covered will include communication, intimacy, role renegotiation, etc...

February 16: "Children and Reunion" Dr. Michael Faran, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, will address the challenges children face when reuniting with their deployed parent.

February 23: "Combat Stress and Effects on the Family"

Chaplain Lance Sneath with focus on combat stress and the impact it may have on families during the reunion process.

The lecture series will be held at the Nehelani Club, from 1830-2000

Free Childcare is available to Blue Star Card Holders By calling 655-3929 ONE WEEK prior to date care is needed. For more information, call ACS at 655-2400.

FY 2004 Tax Filing Info

The Internal Revenue Service is working with the Dept of Defense to identify taxpayers who are serving in a combat zone so that the IRS may suspend compliance actions, such as audits or enforced collections, **until 180 days after the taxpayer has left the combat zone.**

Taxpayers qualifying for such combat zone relief may also notify the IRS directly of their status through a special e-mail address: combatzone@irs.gov. They should provide name, stateside address, date of birth and date of deployment and redeployment to and from the combat zone. They should not include any social security numbers in an e-mail. This notification may be made by the taxpayer, spouse, or authorized agent or representative.

The IRS cannot provide tax account information by e-mail. Therefore, we will send responses to any questions about the taxpayer's account by regular mail to the address we have on record for the person, within two business days. We may provide general answers to questions regarding the status of individual combat zone updates via e-mail.